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ABSTRACT

Telephone interviews with 389 people were conducted by undergraduate students to test the hypothesis that attention to economic news in the media would result in more beliefs about the economy, and that both news media attention and beliefs would lead to the holding of stronger attitudes toward the current administration's economic policy. Questions on the survey were designed to probe the respondents' knowledge of current economic conditions and leaders in the economic sphere of activity, their attention to economic issues in the media, and their attitudes toward President Reagan's economic policies. Years of formal education and a seven-point party identification scale, running from strong Democrat to strong Republican, were also included in the analysis. The responses indicated that, for men, attention to economic issues in the newspaper predicted attitude strength directly. Education, while predicting beliefs for the men, had no significant direct path to attitude strength. The picture was different for women, for whom education and strength of party identification seemed to be the only predictors of attitude strength. (The questionnaire is appended.) (HOD)

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BY

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Gender Differences in the Predictors

of Attitude Strength

The study of attitudes has declined in mass communications research. Their role as perhaps the most important dependent variables in hypotheses about mass media effects has been replaced by an emphasis on the cognitive outcomes of media use (Chaffee, 1977). There seems to have been a change in the definition of what constitutes a "media effect." Issues such as agenda setting, learning of political information and the creation of social and political "realities" have to a great extent superceded the role of attitudes as important dependent variables.

Abandoned in this shift of emphasis is the vary narrow approach to the concept of attitude that characterized much of the early communications research, resulting in Klapper's (1960) conclusion that the effects of media were limited to the reinforcement of previously held attitudes. But attitudes should not be left out entirely, especially if we accept Allport's conclusion that attitude is "the most distinctive and indispensable concept of contemporary American social psychology" (1968, p. 59). However, the recent emphasis on cognitive effects of of media need not be seen as an abandonment of attitudes if one also abandons the rather artificial distinction between the concepts of cognition and affect that is often presented. It seems to be more and more understood that attitudes are not independent elements, but have antecedents in beliefs, values and information, and exist in more or less organized systems (Best, 1973). One attitude can be seen as a sort of outcropping of perhaps a very extensive and complex system.

Becker, McCombs and McLeod (1975) have pointed out that this preoccupation with attitudes, especially the direction of attitudes--may be unwarranted, given the primarily informational function of the American news media. Chaffee, Ward and Tipton (1970) note, for example, that "the most likely effects of the media in political socialization are in the acquisition of political knowledge and the building of interest in public affairs." They continue, "Knowledge and interest are important indices of political socialization and should (hopefully) precede the development of particular opinions" (p. 392).

Best (1973) has listed two components of an attitude: awareness of the attitude object and an evaluation of that attitude object. Awareness is a form of knowledge, of course, and the formation of a positive or negative evaluation requires that the individual see the attitude object as being salient, in at least a minimal way. It seems very easy to construct plausible hypotheses about how the news media might affect both of these attitude components.

Related to these points, it seems, is the concern with the strength with which attitudes are held and expressed. Public opinion researchers have long realized the importance of the difference between a whispered and a shouted response to an opinion survey (Roll and Cantril, 1980). The strength of attitudes can identify the "effective public opinion" that has so much to do with political and social activism (Wilhoit and Weaver, 1980).

Knowing that an attitude object exists, feeling the need to evaluate it and the strength of the evaluation all seem to be part of a process that is closely linked to the news media. Indeed, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship of attention to the news media and the strength with which attitudes are expressed. Of particular interest is the relationship of news media attention to one of the components of a belief system--the knowledge people think they have about an issue.

Gender and Political Attitudes

Polls over the past several years have shown considerable divergence between men and women on attitudes toward President Reagan, as well as on various social and political issues (Gallup, 1981, 1982). This evidence of a "gender gap," along with the demonstration in numerous studies of sex differences in political involvement, suggests that the gender of the respondent ought to be a factor in any study of attitude structures. Milbrath and Goel (1977) write, "The finding that men are more likely to participate in politics than women is one of the most thoroughly substantiated in political science" (p. 116). They tie this to feelings of political efficacy, claiming that "men are more likely than women to feel they are qualified to deal with the complexities of politics" (p. 117). Rapoport (1982) found that women were more likely to give "don't know" answers to questions than were men, although he found the sex difference to be much less among younger respondents. Like Milbrath and Goel, he links this difference to differences in political efficacy. Welch (1977) lists three factors she says prevent women from participating in politics at the same level as men: socialization, family responsibilities and their over-representation in low education and low income groups. She says that when these latter two factors are accounted for, women are just as likely to participate as are men.

Given that there are important gender differences in political knowledge, attitude holding, behavior and attitude direction, it seems imperative to include gender as an important contingent condition in this analysis of the predictors of attitude strength.

Attitudes, Knowledge and Beliefs

Krech and Crutchfield (1948) defined attitude as "an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of the individual's world" (p. 152). More recently, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) have proposed that "a person's attitude toward any object is a function of his beliefs about the object and the implicit evaluative responses associated with those beliefs" (p. 29). Beliefs, they write, "represent the information he (the individual) has about the (attitude) object" (p. 12). Beliefs, they propose, make up the cognitive component of attitudes. Rosenberg (1960) defines the cognitive base of attitudes as the individual's "expectations about how his values are served through the agency of the attitude object" (p. 16).

The point of these discussions is that what we know, or more to the point, what we <u>think</u> we know, about attitude objects determines to a large extent the attitudes we form toward them. Thus, if the individual equates the concept/issue "feminism" with the "breakdown of traditional family values," and he or she evaluates this attribute negatively, then his or her attitude toward feminism is likely to be negative. Some might argue that this definition of feminism is "wrong," but that misses the point. What is relevant for attitude formation are the definitions and attributes -- the beliefs -- that the individual has arrived at or has accepted from other sources, regardless of their "truth."

These beliefs, according to Fishbein and Azjen, come from many sources and vary in kind from simple descriptive beliefs, based on observation, to inferential beliefs, in which individuals link objects with attributes based on assumed constellations of attributes. In other words we have hypotheses about "what goes with what" and these may lead us to beliefs that run rather far afield from our original observations.

Beliefs may play a role, not only in the direction of attitudes but also in the strength with which they are held. Rosenberg notes that strong attitudes result when objects seem to be related to important values, or when there is high confidence that the perceived relationship is the correct one. Moderately or weakly held attitudes result when the values involved are of less importance, or when the individual is less certain about the correctness of the connections he or she has made. To Fishbein and Azjen, weak attitudes result when the subjective probability is fairly low that an attribute applies to an attitude object, when a person is not sure about his or her beliefs.

While attitudes may depend upon the beliefs that are held and the evaluations of those beliefs, beliefs also differ themselves in the degree to which they carry evaluations. A simple descriptive belief such as "after the light turns red, the traffic stops" is less likely to evoke a negative or positive evaluation in terms of one's value system than "Republican administrations favor the rich."

What the person thinks he or she knows--the beliefs held about the attitude object--whether they provoke evaluations or not--would relate to the confidence with which the attitude is held and therefore to its strength. Fishbein and Azjen write, "To be sure, when the person has little information on which to base the inference, his subjective probability may be at chance level, indicating a high degree of uncertainty" (p. 134). In other words, confidence in the connection is low. The resulting attitude would therefore be weak. For example, a mere acquaintanceship with the label "feminism" is not likely to produce an attitude of strength and durability, whereas beliefs about the meaning of the concept, who supports it, who opposes it, and what it means to individual women would be far more likely to produce strong and change-resistant attitudes.

Beliefs, Attitudes and the News Media

While beliefs can come from personal observation and can also develop from a largely internal inference process, they can also be provided by outside sources, such as friends, family, co-workers and the mass media. These beliefs are quite often of the simple descriptive types -- the mere linkage of two objects in the environment, or the linkage of attributes to objects. However, these descriptive beliefs can be used in the formation of inferential beliefs by the recipients of the information. Individuals may or may not accept information provided by other sources, depending upon their previously formed beliefs and attitudes, and estimations of the credibility of the source. But as Fishbein and Azjen point out, at the very least the individual will form a belief in the form "X said Y about Z," for example, "CBS News reported last night that Ronald Reagan is opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment."

The news media are full of such descriptive and inferential beliefs, some of which may evoke evaluations and some of which may increase or decrease the confidence with which people hold their beliefs.

The presentation of conflicting definitions of situations and events, of spokespersons who disagree about the reality and interpretation of events and issues, and of very vivid images

that may themselves contradict what spokespersons say all may contribute to the formation of important beliefs. People may obtain information from the news media that can increase the confidence with which they hold their beliefs, as well as add to their overall store of beliefs about attitude objects.

The issues of concern in this paper are attitudes toward the economic policies of the Reagan Administration, attention to economic issues in the news media, and the existence of beliefs about the economy. The general hypothesis is that attention to economic news in the media will result in more beliefs about the economy, and that both news media attention and beliefs will then lead to the holding of stronger attitudes toward Adminstration economic policy.

It should not be anticipated that the media are equal in their role in these processes. Television news, while perhaps most able to communicate dramatic and rapidly moving events such as natural disasters, assassinations and space adventures, is much less able to communicate the meaning of complex and long-term political issues, processes and activities (Wade and Schramm, 1969; Benton and Frazer, 1976; Clarke and Fredin, 1978). Therefore, the dominant medium in this hypothesis should be attention to newspapers.

Method

The data consist of 389 telephone interviews conducted in March, 1982 by students in an undergraduate class at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Respondents were selected at random from the Dane County (Madison) telephone directory. While not all of the student-interviewers kept accurate records of their calls, response rate information is available for 31 of the 36 interviewers. Of the numbers at which interviewers contacted someone, 34 percent resulted in refusals. Roughly 20 percent of the completed interviews were verified. Two interviews were selected at random from each interviewer. These respondents were called and asked if they remembered being interviewed. No evidence of interview faking was found.

Questions on the survey relevant to this study include six designed to probe the respondents' knowledge of current economic conditions and leaders in the economic sphere of activity, their attention to economic issues in the media, and their attitudes toward President Reagan's economic policies. Years of formal education and a seven-point party identification scale, running from strong Democrat to strong Republican, were also included in the analysis.

The knowledge questions included three in an unaided recall format in which respondents were asked to estimate the current annual rate of inflation, the size of the projected

federal budget deficit and the current rate of unemployment. Other knowledge questions used a multiple choice format and required the respondents to match the names of individuals involved in economic issues with their formal positions. The individuals to be identified were Budget Director David Stockman, Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, and the then-president of the United Auto Workers, Douglas Fraser.

The media questions asked the individuals whether they paid a lot, quite a bit, some, a little or no attention to news about the economy in their newspapers and on television. This attention question was chosen rather than a frequency-of-use question because of previous research showing that these questions are more highly related to economic knowledge and economic discussion than are questions of the "how many days a week..." variety. They may also have more relevance to the respondents' actual cognitive involvement with the media than these frequency-of-use questions (Kennamer, 1983).

The dependent variable in this study consists of a question asking respondents to rate the president's economic policies on a five-point scale with possible responses of: strongly approve, somewhat approve, neutral, somewhat disapprove and strongly disapprove. Wording of the questions can be found in the Appendix.

Both the attitude-toward-Reagan-policies scale and the party identification scale were "folded" so that strong positions--whether approving or disapproving, or Republican or Democrat --

received the highest score and less strong positions received lower scores. In both cases, the "don't know" responses were considered to be zeros. The Reagan attitude scale had four positions, 0 for don't know, 1 for neutral, 2 for somewhat approve or disapprove, and 3 for strongly approve or disapprove. On the party identification scale, values ranged from 0 to 4, where 0 was don't know, 1 was a refusal to choose between the two parties, 2 was "if you had to choose", 3 signified a "not strong" partisanship, and 4 meant the person said he or she was either a strong Democrat or a strong Republican.

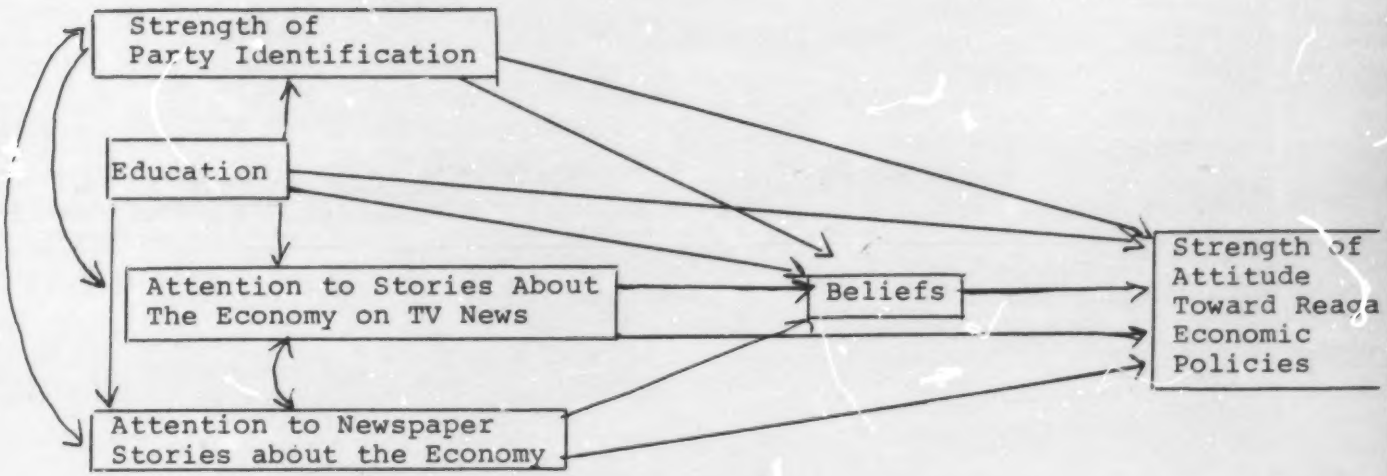
A major issue in this study is the conceptualization of beliefs. The knowledge questions are used to create this variable. Respondents are rated not on how many of their responses to these questions were correct, but rather, on the number of the six questions they answered. In other words, this belief variable purports to measure the number of times the respondents believed they had information.

The obvious difficulty with this is that it cannot take into account the very real possibility that some individuals simply guessed in order to avoid looking uninformed. This is the problem of social desirability and these responses may not reflect the individual's feeling that they know something about these issues. They are undetectable in this data, however, and if there are very many of them, they would depress the relationship this belief variable has with other relevant variables.

The analysis is presented in two stages. The first looks at the zero-order Pearson correlations, showing the basic bivariate relationship that sparked the interest in this study. Following are path analyses which attempt to test the viability of the causal model shown in Figure 1.

Of course, a true test of the nature of these hypothesized causal relations is impossible in this cross-sectional data. Path analysis cannot determine the direction of causation from correlational data, but as Kerlinger and Pedhazur (1973) note, path analysis can "shed light on the tenability of a theoretical model" (p.307). In this case, the antecedent variables are hypothesized to be a previously existing strength of party identification, level of education and established patterns of news media attention. Beliefs are seen to result from some combination of these factors, and all of the earlier variables are also seen to impact directly on the strength of the specific attitude. The hypothesis here is that there will be positive and significant path coefficients between media attention -- most likely newspaper attention -- and beliefs, and that there will also be a positive and significant path coefficient between beliefs and attitude strength. There may also be positive and significant path coefficients between media attention and attitude strength.

Figure 1


Strength of Party Identification
Education
Attention to Stories About The Economy on TV News
Attention to Newspaper Stories about the Economy
Beliefs
Strength of Attitude Toward Reaga Economic Policies

Gender and the Antecedents of Attitude Strength

Earlier discussion pointed out the need to consider gender as a major factor in studies of attitudes since there seem to be so many differences between men and women on various political variables. Table 1 shows that indeed in this data there are very important differences on several of the important variables of concern in this study. Men express more beliefs about the economy, pay more attention to the news media and have more education. Women seem to have slightly stronger party identification, although the difference does not quite reach statistical significance.

The most interesting comparison in this table, however, may be that men and women are equal on the dependent variable of this study--strength of their attitude toward Ronald Reagan's economic policies--while being significantly lower than men on four of the five hypothesized antecedents of this variable. Even though the level of attitude strength seems to be the same for both men and women, since the antecedents are so different, the process through which this level is reached may be quite different for the two groups. Therefore, the analyses were conducted, and are shown, separately for men and women in order to detect any such differences.

Table 1

Mean Differences in Attitude Strength, Beliefs, Knowledge, Discussion, Media Attention and Education by Gender of Respondent

Variable	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Value	2-Tailed Probability
Attitude Strength					
Men	210	2.10	0.75	0.07	0.99
Women	179	2.10	0.75		
Beliefs					
Men	210	4.41	1.68	8.36	0.00
Women	179	2.92	1.84		
Television Attention					
Men	209	2.55	1.23	2.57	0.01
Women	179	2.23	1.23		
Newspaper Attention					
Men	210	2.59	1.18	4.31	0.00
Women	177	2.08	1.11		
Strength of Party ID					
Men	205	2.21	1.01	-1.77	0.08
Women	175	2.40	1.02		
Education					
Men	208	15.31	2.99	2.21	0.03
Women	176	14.68	2.48		

Results

Table 2 shows zero-order Pearson correlations among the variables of concern in this study -- attitude strength, beliefs, newspaper and television attention, strength of party identification and education -- calculated separately for men and women. It is apparent from this table that the men and women are quite different. Attitude strength, beliefs and newspaper attention are far more highly intercorrelated for the men than for the women. For example, the correlation between beliefs and attitude strength among the men ($r = 0.31$) is twice what it is among the women ($r = 0.15$). The correlations between television attention and beliefs and attitude strength are generally smaller than those shown between newspaper attention and these two variables. But there is also a different pattern for women than for men. Television attention shows a significant, although minor, correlation with attitude strength among the men, but not among the women. On the other hand, television attention shows a significant, but again minor, correlation with beliefs for the women, but not for men. Education shows different relationships as well. While equally strongly related to beliefs in both groups, its correlation with attitude strength among the women ($r = 0.33$) is twice what it is among the men ($r = 0.14$).

Table 2

Correlations Between Relevant Variables for Men and Women

Women \ Men	Attitude Strength	Beliefs	Newspaper Attention	TV Attention	Party ID Strength	Education
Attitude Strength		0.31[c] (210)	0.24[c] (210)	0.12[a] (209)	0.27[c] (205)	0.14[a] (208)
Beliefs	0.15[a] (177)		0.30[c] (210)	0.03 (209)	0.18[c] (205)	0.41[c] (208)
Newspaper Attention	0.15[a] (177)	0.23[c] (177)		0.23[c] (209)	0.07 (205)	0.27[c] (208)
Television Attention	-0.02 (179)	0.15[a] (179)	0.30[c] (177)		-0.06 (204)	-0.11 (207)
Party ID Strength	0.28[c] (175)	0.08 (175)	0.08 (173)	-0.03 (175)		0.09 (204)
Education	0.33[c] (175)	0.43[c] (176)	0.14[a] (174)	0.00 (176)	0.16[a] (172)	

[a] $p < 0.05$

[b] $p < 0.01$

[c] $p < 0.001$

Figures 2 and 3 show the results of multiple regression analyses which were used to produce path coefficients to test the model presented in Figure 1. Path coefficients are shown only if they are significant at or beyond the 0.05 level.

Figure 2 shows the results for the men in this sample, and seems to provide support for the hypotheses. The path coefficients between newspaper attention and beliefs and then between beliefs and attitude strength are both 0.21 ($p < 0.01$). The direct path between newspaper attention and attitude strength is a smaller but a still significant 0.13 ($p < 0.05$). Neither of the paths between television attention and beliefs and between television attention and attitude strength are significant.

Other significant paths include a direct path from strength of party identification to attitude strength (0.23; $p < 0.01$) and between strength of party identification and beliefs (0.15; $p < 0.05$). Education has a very strong path to beliefs (0.34; $p < 0.01$), but no direct path to attitude strength.

Figure 3 shows that the model must be considerably simplified for women. Neither media attention variable shows a significant path to beliefs or directly to attitude strength. While education is a very strong predictor of beliefs (0.41; $p < 0.01$), beliefs are not at all connected to attitude strength for these women. Education is also strongly tied to attitude strength through a direct path (0.28; $p < 0.01$), a very different situation

from what was seen with the men. Strength of party identification is unrelated to beliefs, but has a significant direct path to attitude strength (0.21; $p < 0.01$).

The hypotheses seem to be unsupported among these women. Neither media attention nor beliefs play any role in attitude strength. Strength of party identification shows a path to attitude strength of similar size to that shown among men. Education, however, plays a role for these women, showing a strong and direct path to attitude strength, that it did not play for men.

Figure 2

Path Coefficients for Men

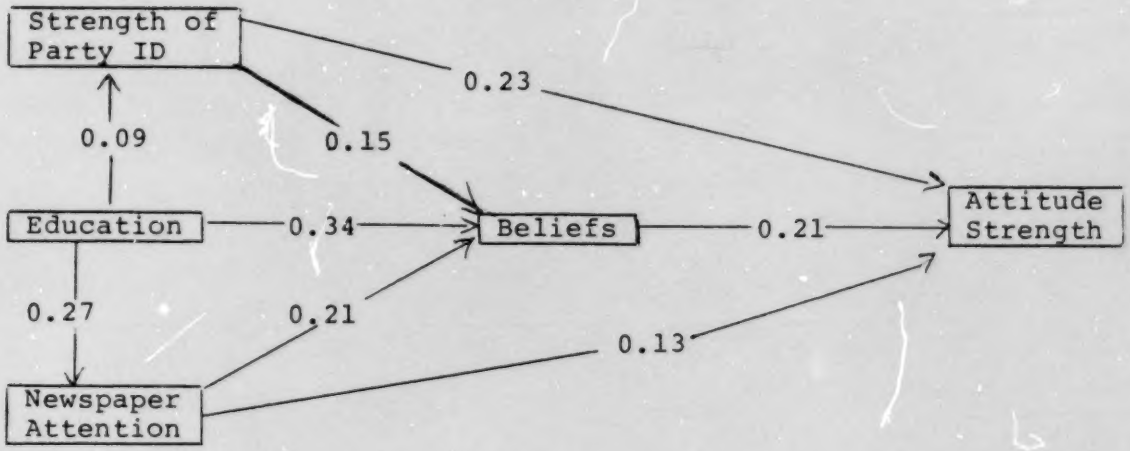
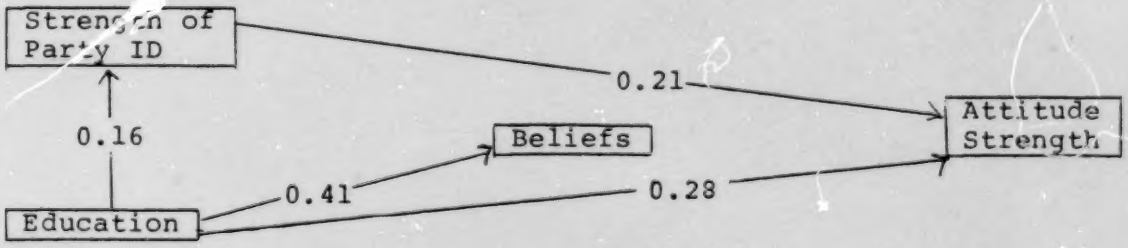


Figure 3

Path Coefficients for Women



Discussion

The results of these analyses provide mixed support for the hypotheses. For men, the model containing media attention, beliefs and attitude strength seems to be supported. Attention to economic issues in the newspaper predicts both attitude strength directly, and also operates indirectly through its relationship with beliefs, which are themselves significantly related to attitude strength. Beliefs, as predicted, seem to occupy an important place in the attitude formation process. Education, while predicting beliefs for these men, has no significant direct path to attitude strength.

The picture is very different for women, for whom education and strength of party identification seem to be the only predictors of attitude strength. While education also has a very strong connection to beliefs, the model fails when the predicted link between beliefs and attitude strength does not materialize. At least in these data, beliefs and attitude strength appear to be separate outcomes of education. There is no significant input among these women of media attention -- either newspaper or television -- for either beliefs or attitude strength.

The fact that media attention and beliefs do not seem to explain anything about women's strength of attitudes seems to deserve some comment, although no real resolution is possible

here. As was noted earlier, women differ greatly from men on many measures of political involvement. In this data set, however, men and women are equally likely to express attitudes and are equal in the strength with which they express them (Table 1). The differences occur in the antecedents. And as was suspected because of this circumstance, the processes by which the antecedents relate to this outcome seem to be quite different (Figures 2 and 3).

Two factors seem to warrant discussion in relation to this--beliefs and education. While women express fewer beliefs than men, this seems to result from different ways in which they process the knowledge questions. Given the way the beliefs variable was constructed, it could be alternatively concluded that women are more likely to give "don't know" responses to questions about what they know about the economy. This is clearly evident in Table 4 where it can be seen that women are twice as likely to give these "don't know" responses on each of the six questions used to create the beliefs variable.

Table 3

Percent "Don't Know" Responses
for Belief Question by Sex

Question	Men	Women	Ratio Women/Men
Volcker	33%	59%	1.8
Stockman	15%	27%	1.8
Fraser	33%	53%	1.6
Deficit	40%	74%	1.9
Unemployment	10%	33%	3.3
Inflation	23%	58%	2.5

Men, on the other hand, are more likely to give an incorrect response. While they less often admit to not knowing the answer to a question, they are more likely to guess and get the answer wrong than women. Men averaged 1.27 incorrect responses to the six questions, compared to 1.03 incorrect responses for women. The difference is significant, using a t-test, at the 0.05 level.

These results would seem to follow from socialization differences and may say something about differences in the way social desirability affects the different genders when they respond to questions. Men are expected to know about political issues, so they probably feel more pressure to answer such questions. The result would be that they guess more often than women, since women may feel less pressure to be competent in this area. So, at least some of the difference in the number of beliefs expressed by men and women may be due to this increased rate of guessing among the men. Further efforts to relate these findings to attitude strength would be pure speculation since there are no data here on which to base such a discussion. It seems safe to say, however, that different processes may be at work in these two groups -- that women's beliefs have different origins than men's and also seem to have different implications for their attitudes.

The sex-related differences in the role education plays seem also to indicate that women's attitudes are formed according to different processes than men's. If one considers education to be a source of both objective and subjective competence, it could be concluded that for women education is a more important factor than it is for men. It may be women's major -- perhaps the only -- source of feelings of competence, efficacy and confidence about political issues. Men can assume themselves competent simply because they are men. They don't need education for this purpose. For a woman to hold and express attitudes, and to otherwise participate in politics, she must overcome her socialization. Women may have to convince themselves they are competent, and education may be the major way to do it.

These data were not gathered to delve into the issues of sex-role socialization, and this discussion must therefore be considered only suggestive. But the results of this study do seem to suggest that an explanation of this sort is plausible. What is remarkable, as well, is that these rather major differences persisted in 1982 in one of the more liberal, well-educated and actively feminist communities in the United States.

At any rate, the theoretical model proposed here seems to receive some support, but only for men. If the analyses had been conducted on the entire sample -- without separating on sex -- support for the null hypothesis would have been the

result. This seems to make it clear that gender is an important variable to be factored into studies of attitude formation and change. Too often it has not been considered, and no doubt this omission has retarded the understanding of these processes. While one would hope for the widest possible generalizability of one's findings, the identification of contingent conditions is an ongoing and important part of social science. It has been proven very important in mass media research (McLeod and Reeves, 1980). Gender appears to be an important contingent condition, and the reasons for the differences between men and women in this area need to be more closely investigated.

APPENDIX

Question Wording

First of all, I would like to ask you a few questions about your use of the news media.

1. On how many days in the past seven days did you watch the national news on television? (CIRCLE RESPONSE)

   0. None | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7. ALL 8. DK | 9. NA

*1a. How much attention did you pay to news on TV about the nation's economy--a lot, quite a bit, some, very little, or no attention?

   0. None 1. A lot 2. Quite a bit 3. Some 4. Very Little 8. DK

2. How many days in the last seven did you read a newspaper? (CIRCLE RESPONSE)

   0. None | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7. ALL 8. DK | 9. NA

*2a. How much attention did you pay to articles in the newspaper about the nation's economy--a lot, quite a bit, some, very little, or no attention? (CIRCLE RESPONSE)

   0. None 1. A lot 2. Quite a bit 3. Some 4. Very Little 8. DK 9. NA

3. Taking the president's economic policies as a whole, would you say you strongly approve of them, somewhat approve, are neutral, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of them? (CIRCLE RESPONSE)

   1. strongly approve
   2. somewhat approve
   3. neutral
   4. somewhat disapprove
   5. strongly disapprove
   7. Don't know
   8. No answer

*This question was used in this research project.

4. Turning to another topic now, do you ever think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, an Independent or what? (IF YES) Which one?

1. Republican 2. Democrat 3. Independent 4. No Preference 5. Other party 7. DK

4a. Would you call yourself a strong or not very strong (Party Name)?

1. Strong 2. Not Strong 7. DK

4b. Do you think of yourself as being closer to the Republican or Democratic Party?

1. Closer to Republican
2. Closer to Democratic
3. Neither
7. Don't Know

There is a lot of information in the news, and it's hard to keep up with a lot of it. I'm going to ask you some questions about some things you might have heard about. Try answering as best you can and don't worry if you don't know the answers.

5. Now, do you happen to know about what the current annual rate of inflation is?

(IF RESPONSE IS SOMETHING VAGUE LIKE "It's really high," CONTINUE WITH A PROBE SUCH AS "Could you be a little more specific?")

77. DK 88. NA

6. About how big is the administration saying the federal budget deficit will be next year?

(IF RESPONSE IS SOMETHING VAGUE LIKE "billions" RESPOND WITH A PROBE SUCH AS "Could you be a bit more specific?")

77. DK 88. NA

7. What is the current rate of unemployment?

(SEE ABOVE NOTES ON PROBES) 77. DK 88. NA

8. With so many names in the news it is sometimes hard to keep up with them all. But could you tell me who Paul Volcker is? Is he a senator from Ohio, head of the Federal Reserve, or the Secretary of Labor?

1. Senator
2. Head of Federal Reserve
3. Labor Secretary
7. Don't know
8. No answer

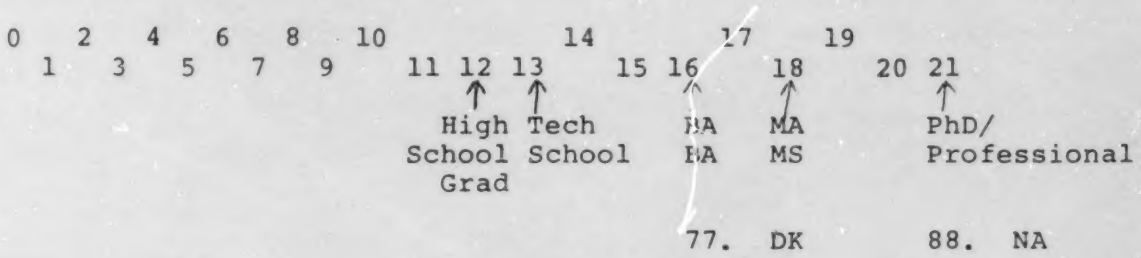
9. How about David Stockman? Is he Secretary of the Treasury, head of the Senate Budget Committee, or Federal Budget Director?

1. Secretary of the Treasury
2. Senate Budget Committee Head
3. Federal Budget Director
7. Don't know
8. No answer

10. And Douglas Fraser? Is he a Supreme Court Justice, President of the United Auto Workers Union, or Secretary of Commerce.

1. Supreme Court Justice
2. United Auto Workers President
3. Secretary of Commerce
7. Don't know
8. No answer

11. What is the highest year of school you attended? (CIRCLE ONE)



Thank you for your attention and patience in answering these questions. We appreciate your cooperation. Someone may be calling again to verify that this interview actually took place. Would you mind telling me your first name so that we can make sure we talk to the right person.

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12. Sex of Respondent

1. male
2. female

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